

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

1-39. (canceled)

40. (previously presented)      An isolated endoglucanase comprising the amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 or 11.

41-59. (canceled)

60. (currently amended)      An isolated polynucleotide comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

61. (currently amended) The polynucleotide according to claim 60, wherein said polynucleotide comprises the DNA sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 or 12, ~~or a modified sequence thereof.~~

62. (previously presented)      The polynucleotide according to claim 60, wherein said polynucleotide comprises a nucleotide sequence in which codons have been optimized for a host by selecting those codons frequently used by the host.

63. (original) The polynucleotide according to claim 62, wherein said nucleotide sequence in which codons have been optimized is the DNA sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO: 13.

64. (previously presented) An expression vector comprising the polynucleotide according to claim 60.

65. (previously presented) A host cell transformed with the polynucleotide according to claim 60.

66. (original) The host cell according to claim 65, wherein said host cell is a yeast or filamentous fungus.

67. (original) The host cell according to claim 66, wherein the yeast belongs to the genus *Saccharomyces*, the genus *Hansenula* or the genus *Pichia*.

68. (original) The host cell according to claim 66, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

69. (original) The host cell according to claim 66, wherein the filamentous fungus belongs to the genus *Humicola*, the genus *Aspergillus*, the genus *Trichoderma*, the genus *Acremonium* or the genus *Fusarium*.

70. (original) The host cell according to claim 66, wherein the filamentous fungus is *Humicola insolens*, *Aspergillus niger* or *Trichoderma viride*.

71. (currently amended) A method for producing the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~, comprising cultivating the host cell according to claim 65 and recovering the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ from said host cell and/or the resultant cultivation broth.

72. (original) An endoglucanase produced by the method according to claim 71.

73. (currently amended) A cellulase preparation comprising the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

74. (currently amended) A method of treating cellulose-containing fabrics, comprising a step of contacting the cellulose-containing fabrics with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

75. (currently amended) A method of reducing the rate at which cellulose-containing fabrics become fuzzy or for reducing fuzzing in cellulose-containing fabrics, comprising a step of contacting the cellulose-containing fabrics with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

76. (currently amended) A method of weight loss treatment for cellulose-containing fabrics to improve its touch and appearance, comprising a step of contacting the cellulose-containing fabrics with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

77. (currently amended) A method of providing color clarification of colored cellulose-containing fabrics, comprising a step of treating the colored cellulose-containing fabrics with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

78. (currently amended) A method of providing a localized variation in color of colored cellulose-containing fabrics, comprising a step of treating the colored cellulose-containing fabrics with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

79. (currently amended) A method of reducing the rate at which cellulose-containing fabrics become stiff or reducing stiffness in cellulose-containing fabrics, comprising a step of treating the cellulose-containing fabrics with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

80. (previously presented) The method according to claim 74, wherein the treatment of the fabrics is performed through soaking, washing or rinsing the fabrics.

81. (currently amended) An additive to detergent comprising the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40 in a non-scattering granular form or a stabilized liquid form.

82. (currently amended) A detergent composition comprising the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

83. (currently amended) A method of improving the freeness of a paper pulp, comprising a step of treating the paper pulp with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

84. (currently amended) A method of deinking a waste paper, comprising a step of treating the waste paper with the endoglucanase, ~~modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40 in the presence of a deinking agent.

85. (currently amended) A method of improving the digestibility of an animal feed, comprising a step of treating a cellulose-containing feed with the endoglucanase ~~enzyme, protein, modified protein or homologue~~ according to claim 40.

86. (currently amended) An isolated endoglucanase comprising the amino acid sequence as shown in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 or 11, the endoglucanase exhibiting endoglucanase activity ~~under alkaline conditions~~ at a pH of about 6.5 to about 9.5.